



Full Council Thursday 31st August 2023

Report Title	Northamptonshire Youth Justice Plan 2023/24
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Are there public sector equality duty implications?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Applicable paragraph number/s for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972	

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Youth Justice Plan 2023/24

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 there is a statutory requirement to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan which must provide specified information about the local provision of youth justice services. The Youth Justice Board provides guidance about what must be included in the plan and recommends a structure for the plan. The Youth Justice Plan for the Northamptonshire Youth Justice Service 2023 is attached at **Appendix A**.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. Youth Offending Teams are statutory partnerships, established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, with the principal aim of preventing offending by children and young people. Local authorities are responsible for establishing a Youth Offending Team. Police, the Probation Service and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) are statutorily required to assist in their funding and operation

- 2.2. This current plan covers performance for the period 2022/23 and provides service budgets, operational and strategic developments within the service and partnership, service structure and the Service Improvement Plan for 2023 – 2024.
- 2.3. The Youth Justice Plan must be submitted to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) and published in accordance with the directions of the Secretary of State. After submission to the YJB, Youth Justice Plans are sent to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP - lead for Youth Offending Service inspections) and are placed in the House of Commons library.

3. Recommendations

3.1. It is recommended that full Council:

- a) Approve the content of the Youth Justice Plan 2023/24.
- b) Note Northamptonshire's Youth Offending Service priorities for 2023/24 as set out in the plan.

3.2. Reasons for Recommendations:

- To accord with the constitution of the Council where the Youth Justice Plan forms part of the Policy Framework that is decided by Full Council.
- To provide strategic direction to the Youth Offending Service that is delivered by Northamptonshire Children's Trust.

3.3. Alternative Options Considered:

None - As well as being a requirement of statute, the Youth Justice Plan forms part of the Council's Policy Framework and approval by the Council is therefore required.

4. Report Background

- 4.1. The Youth Offending Service (YOS) is a statutory multi agency service, which has a responsibility to prevent offending and reoffending by those aged under 18 years who are resident in Northamptonshire. Northamptonshire YOS is well respected nationally as an innovative service achieving good outcomes for children and young people.
- 4.2. There is a statutory requirement to produce and submit to the Youth Justice Board a Youth Justice Plan as set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 section 40. The plan should set out how youth justice services are to be provided and funded, how the Youth Offending Service will be composed and

funded, how it will operate and what functions it will carry out. The Plan must be submitted for approval to the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and published in accordance with the directions of the Secretary of State. The submission of the plan is also a condition for receipt by the service of the second instalment of the Youth Justice Board Good Practice Grant.

- 4.3. The areas of work for the YOS are laid out in legislation, government policy and national guidance. The detail of local operational priorities and delivery are developed in agreement and with reference to key local strategic boards including Community Safety Executive; Children Trust Board; Local Safeguarding Children's Board and Northamptonshire's North and East Criminal Justice Board.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1. Statute requires the production of an annual Youth Justice Plan, the YJB also welcomes plans that cover more than one year. Plans must cover both strategic and operational elements. The wider strategic picture should be captured, whilst also outlining the key business activities that will be undertaken by services to achieve wider strategic aims.
- 5.2. The YJ Plan should set out the direction and strategy of youth justice services, describing how quality services will be provided to ensure positive outcomes for children and improvements in performance indicators, in particular:
- reducing first time entrants to the youth justice system
 - reducing the use of custody
 - reducing reoffending rates
 - locally agreed performance indicators that evidence positive outcomes for children
- 5.3. The YJ Plan must describe how leadership and governance is set up to monitor the quality and effectiveness of youth justice services across your area.
- 5.4. The Northamptonshire Youth Justice Plan has identified the following priorities:
- Strategic Priority 1 – Early Help & Prevention
 - Strategic Priority 2 - Recognising and responding to child exploitation and serious youth violence
 - Strategic Priority 3 – Tackling disproportionality in the criminal justice system
- 5.5. Due to the restrictions of the YJB prescriptive approach, the YOS is prevented from innovating and ensuring the document is child friendly and accessible to all. The YJB has a long list of key headings and directives the YOS must follow which as a result restricts some of the community.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1. The Youth Justice Plan must be submitted to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) and published in accordance with the directions of the Secretary of State. After submission to the YJB, Youth Justice Plans are sent to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP - lead for YOS inspections) and are placed in the House of Commons Library).

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources and Financial

- 7.1.1. The budget structure of the Youth Offending Service (YOS) is complex in nature as there are a number of funding streams. The 2023/24 indicative grant award for Northamptonshire's Youth Offending Service (NYOS) is £737,177 which is based on the 2022/23 allocation of £705,433 and a 4.5% uplift amounting to £31,745. The uplift of 4.5% is still subject to confirmation by the Youth Justice Board (Ministry of Justice).
- 7.1.2. The YJB require submission of the Youth Justice Plan which must be agreed by the Management Board and signed-off by the Chair prior to receiving the grant.
- 7.1.3. Alongside the YOS grant, NYOS will also benefit from statutory partner contributions, from both North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council (£1,606,151), Police and Crime commissioner (£200,900), Probation (£31,974), Health (£80,000) and Public Health (£66,112).
- 7.1.4. The total budgeted funding from the YJB Youth Justice and partnership contributions is £2,726,319. This funding will support children across Northamptonshire, in helping them stay away from crime.
- 7.1.5. In respect of the Local Authority contribution, these have been split in accordance with the disaggregation principles applied as part of the overall contract sum, the split is 44.16% for North Northamptonshire Council and 55.64% for West Northamptonshire Council. 100% of grants are paid to North Northamptonshire Council.

7.2. Legal and Governance

- 7.2.1. Local authorities have a statutory duty to submit an annual youth justice plan relating to their provision of youth justice services. Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the youth offending partnership's responsibilities in producing a plan. It states that it is the duty of each local authority, after consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual youth justice plan, setting out:
- How youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded; and

- How the youth offending team (YOT) or equivalent service will be funded, how it will operate, and what functions it will carry out.

7.2.2. The Youth Justice Plan forms part of the Council's Policy Framework, its approval is therefore the responsibility of Full Council.

7.3. **Relevant Policies and Plans**

7.3.1. The Plan supports the following Council priorities identified in the Corporate Plan:

- Active, fulfilled lives
- Better brighter futures
- Safe and thriving places

7.4. **Risk**

7.4.1. There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.

7.5. **Consultation**

7.5.1. In accordance with statutory requirements, the plan was placed before Northamptonshire YOS Management Board on which statutory partners sit (Police, Probation, Health) and was approved in May 2023.

7.5.2. The YOS intends to redraft the plan into a child friendly version once the plan has been agreed. The plan at present is not child friendly due to the prescriptive nature of the YJB requirements, NYOS are committed the young people have a full understanding of the YOS plans for 2023/24. We have identified our Youth Engagement Team to contribute to this.

7.6. **Consideration by the Executive**

7.6.1. The Executive Advisory Panel for Future Communities considered the Youth Justice Plan on 13 July 2023. Feedback received from members indicated that the panel was content with the details contained within the Plan.

7.6.2. The Executive then considered the Plan at its meeting held on 17 August 2023. The Executive supported the Plan, commenting that a holistic approach was important in tackling youth offending, with early intervention being key in diverting children and young people from negative behaviour paths. Additionally, every child had to be treated as an individual, cognisant of the fact that each had their own needs and requirements.

7.7. **Consideration by Scrutiny**

7.7.1. This report has not been considered by Scrutiny.

7.8. **Equality Implications**

7.8.1. There are no specific equality implications from this report.

7.9. **Climate Impact**

7.9.1. There is no specific climate impact arising from this report.

7.10. **Community Impact**

7.10.1. There is no distinct community impact arising from this report.

7.11. **Crime and Disorder Impact**

7.11.1 A Youth Offending Service is a 'statutory partnership' - the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 required Local Authorities to set up multi-agency partnerships to reduce re-offending by children and young people. The age range in the Youth Justice System is 10 to 18. Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service (NYOS) is funded by central government (Ministry of Justice/Youth Justice Board), from the Northamptonshire Children's Trust (NCT) and from partner agencies like the Police, Probation, the NHS and the Drug & Alcohol Action Team (DAAT).

7.11.2 Some of the paid staff are directly employed (by the Northamptonshire Children's Trust) to work in NYOS, others are seconded by their own agency to work within the service. There are: social workers; youth workers; restorative justice workers; education workers; community psychiatric nurses; probation officers; police officers; accommodation workers and substance misuse workers. NYOS also recruits, trains and supports a group of adult volunteers from a range of different backgrounds. NYOS works directly with children and young people who have committed offences; their parents/carers and the victims of their offences. Work is undertaken at all points of the formal system: from Out-of-Court outcomes through to Court Orders, both in the community and with young people in custody.

8. **Background Papers**

8.1. None